

H Y M N S

Concerning the Exalted God-man, Jesus

- 1 Lo! in heaven Jesus sitting,
Christ the Lord is there enthroned;
As the man by God exalted,
With God's glory He is crowned.
- 2 He hath put on human nature,
Died according to God's plan,
Resurrected with a body,
And ascended as a man.
- 3 God in Him on earth was humbled,
God with man was domiciled;
Man in Him in heav'n exalted,
Man with God is reconciled.
4. He as God with man is mingled,
God in man is testified;
He as man with God is blended,
Man in God is glorified.
- 5 From the Glorified in heaven
The inclusive Spirit came;
All of Jesus' work and Person
Doth this Spirit here proclaim.
- 6 With the Glorified in heaven
Is the Church identified;
By the Spirit of this Jesus
Are His members edified.
- 7 Lo! a man is now in heaven
As the Lord of all enthroned;
This is Jesus Christ our Savior,
With God's glory ever crowned!

The person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ are the focal point of time and space. In Him God's eternal purpose for creating man is realized. As the second of the Divine Trinity, He is God, the real and genuine God. He is also man, the most genuine man, who fulfills God's economy by accomplishing God's complete salvation through His incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. In resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), and He now is able to transmit and dispense all that He is and has accomplished into His chosen people. Yet, He is still a man, a man who has been exalted to the heavens as the Lord of all! This mystery, *the* mystery that is unveiled through the divine revelation, is the focus of our hymn for this issue. It is another of the many excellent hymns written by Witness Lee. If we sing this hymn in the full light of the divine revelation, our hearts should be filled

with awe and wonder. There is a *man* who is enthroned as the Ruler of the universe. May our hearts and thoughts be captivated by this marvelous fact as we consider the significance of this song.

The hymn begins with a declaration of a marvelous vision: "Lo! in heaven Jesus sitting." The Bible clearly tells us that the Lord Jesus has ascended to a place that is far above all. In Hebrews 4:14 we read that Jesus, our great High Priest, "has passed through the heavens." Ephesians 4:10 says that He "ascended far above all the heavens." Then Paul tells us of his own unique experience of being "caught away to the third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:2). From these verses we can realize that the Lord Jesus is seated in the third heaven, a region far above all places, persons, and things. Paul affirms this in Ephesians 1:20-21. His writing releases his burden that the believers would receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Christ so that the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened. Through this kind of enlightening, we can know the resurrection power of the Lord which operated in Christ "in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come." These verses indicate that the Lord Jesus is seated at the highest place in the universe, a region or realm beyond all others. God has exalted Him to such a place of honor, authority, and power. He is seated at the preeminent point of the entire creation, both the seen and the unseen.

The chair on which He is seated is the throne of God. In Ephesians 1:20, Paul tells us that He is seated at the right hand of God—the most honorable place, the place with supreme authority. Then in verse 21, Paul announces that He is "far above all." A footnote in the Recovery Version of the New Testament explains the import of this verse:

Rule refers to the highest office, *authority* to every kind of official power (Matt. 8:9), *power* to the mere might of authority, and *lordship* to the preeminence that power establishes. Subsequently, we see that what is listed here includes not only the angelic, heavenly authorities, whether good or evil, but also the human, earthly ones. The ascended Christ was seated by the great power of God far above all rule, authority, power, and lordship in the universe. (Note 1)

The book of Hebrews also speaks of the Lord sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God (1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). As we study the Scriptures, we should realize that the Lord Jesus is seated not only at the right hand of the throne of God, but He is seated even with His Father on His Father's throne (Rev. 3:21). Therefore, John writes of the throne of God and of the Lamb (22:1, 3). Because the Father and the Son are one, they sit as one on the one throne. *At the right hand of the throne of God* indicates that the Lord Jesus in His function and position submits to the Father. But *with My Father on His throne* testifies that the Father has committed all judgment and authority to the Son. When He was on the earth, the Lord said, "For just as the Father has life in Himself, so He gave to the Son to also have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man" (John 5:26-27). The Son, as a man, has been committed with the authority and the responsibility to carry out the administration of God's economy (Matt. 28:18-20). When He rules, the Father rules with Him. Therefore, He is seated with the Father on His throne.

He is seated not just as God but also in the form of a man. Most Christians would agree that the Lord Jesus has ascended into the heavens. Many would also affirm that He is on the throne. But very few Christians realize that the Lord on the throne is there as a man. Of course, we understand that the Lord on the earth was here as the incarnated God, the man Jesus. He was born as a babe and laid in a manger in Bethlehem, grew as a child in a carpenter's home in Nazareth, and ministered as a mature adult in His early thirties to the people of Israel in the land of Palestine. As a man in the garden of Gethsemane, He sweat drops of blood in agony shortly before He was crucified on the cross at Golgotha where He died also as a man. Perhaps most Christians agree that in resurrection He appeared among His disciples as a genuine man having bones and flesh, a fact which He confirmed strongly by inviting them to touch Him and by eating a piece of fish before them (Luke 24:36-43). But how many have carefully thought about the fact that today the Lord on the throne is a man? Stephen saw Him as a man standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:56). Paul proclaims that "there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). The Lord Jesus emphasized that He would come again not as the Son of God, but as the Son of Man (Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62). He was and is God; He also was and is man. It is as a man that He represents and expresses the Godhead for eternity.

Stanza 1 discloses that Jesus sitting in the heavens is enthroned as Christ the Lord. He is the man by God exalted. He is crowned with God's glory. God made the Lord Jesus, as a man, both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), and He highly exalted Him, giving Him a name above every name and causing every knee to bow at this wonderful name

(Phil. 2:9-11). Stanza 2 testifies that He fulfilled the four principal accomplishments of His earthly ministry (putting on human nature, dying on the cross, resurrecting with a body, and ascending to the heavens) as a man. He carried out His economy as a man (cf. Heb. 2:6-18), because God's purpose in the universe is with man. Stanza 3 witnesses on the one hand that God Himself was on the earth as a humble man, living among men during His earthly ministry: "God in Him on earth was humbled, / God with man was domiciled." On the other hand, now man in Him is exalted in heaven, and through Him man with God is reconciled.

Stanza 4 speaks of His incarnation in which God in the Son mingled Himself with man. First, through incarnation, God joined Himself to man in a divine-human union of life. The life of God was in Him (John 1:4), and He Himself was that life (11:25; 14:6). Then He became flesh (1:14), thus joining the divine life with the human life. Second, through death and resurrection, man was brought into God. He was God, having the divine nature, and He was man, having the human nature. In resurrection His humanity was declared and designated as God (Rom. 1:3-4). In Him these two natures were mingled. Thus, the effulgence of the Father's glory and the impress of the Father's substance were shining out and expressed in a genuine man (Heb. 1:3): "God in man is testified." Finally, this wonderful man is blended with God with the result that man is glorified in God. After being fully blended with God, He, as a man, was lifted up into God to express everything that God is. Stanzas 5 and 6 form a transition from the earthly ministry of the glorified God-man, Jesus, into His heavenly work. As the One who is glorified in heaven, He sends His all-inclusive Spirit to proclaim the person and work of Jesus and to transmit to the believers all that the Father and Son have (John 16:12-15). Now the church, the organic Body of the Son composed of the redeemed and regenerated believers, is fully identified with the glorified man in the heavens. And the Spirit of this Jesus, whom He sends edifies the members of His Body, builds them up in the one Body which grows out from the Head (Eph. 4:15-16). Hallelujah! We, the many members, are now enjoying a life-union with the exalted man who is seated on the throne of God's glory to administrate God's economic move on the earth!

The final stanza reaches the crescendo of the divine revelation: "Lo! a man is now in heaven / As the Lord of all enthroned; / This is Jesus Christ our Savior, / With God's glory ever crowned!" Let us pause in worshipful contemplation of our mysterious yet supremely real Savior, Jesus, who has entered into glory for us and is now leading us, the many sons, into that same glory (Heb. 2:10).

by Gary Kaiser